



THAAD is launched to destroy a ballistic missile target with hit-to-kill technology. THAAD is an acronym for "Theater High Altitude Area Defense."

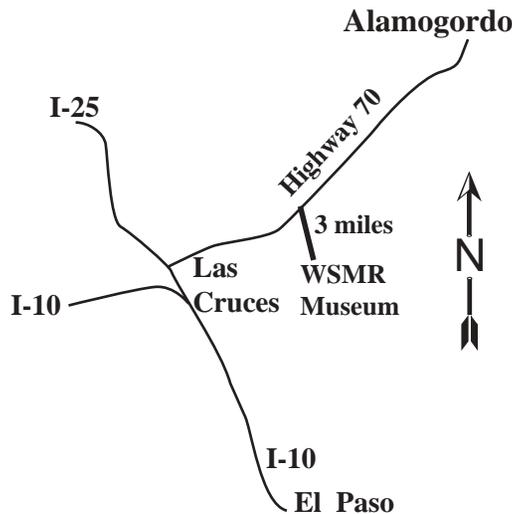
Today, White Sands continues to test the most advanced technologies. Many missiles like the THAAD don't have explosive warheads anymore -- they must actually strike the target to destroy it. Also, powerful lasers are being used to bring down jets and missiles.

At the same time the military shares the range with a huge assortment of plants and animals in almost pristine natural conditions. Recently wildlife biologists studied mountain lions found in the White Sands mountains. Other scientists are currently conducting research on one of the world's largest herds of African Oryx, which freely roams the missile range.

Museum Offers Easy Access

The White Sands Museum includes an outdoor display of more than 50 rockets and missiles once tested on the missile range. We call it the "Missile Park." It includes the huge Redstone, the Nike family of missiles and several Navy sounding rockets. The park is open everyday during daylight hours.

Although the Museum is located on an Army installation, it is open to the public. We are 22 miles east of Las Cruces and 44 miles west of Alamogordo, N.M. To visit you can expect to be required to show your driver's license, vehicle registration and proof of insurance for the vehicle. There is plenty of parking for RVs and trailers beside the building.



Location: Turn off Highway 70 between markers 169 & 170. There are signs on the highway.

Phone: 505-678-8824

Hours: Mon-Fri 8 - 4 Sat-Sun. 10 - 3

Website: www.wsmr-history.org

Museum & Missile Park

White Sands Missile Range

New Mexico 88002



Prehistoric Farmers to Hard Rock Miners to Rocket Scientists

Established in 1945, White Sands Missile Range is America's largest overland military test range. At White Sands the world entered the Atomic Age when the first atomic bomb was tested at Trinity Site on July 16, 1945. In 1949, the world entered the Space Age from White Sands Missile Range, when Bumper, an early two-stage rocket (V-2/WAC Corporal) roared beyond the earth's atmosphere. In 1950, Bumper went on to become the first missile launched from Cape Canaveral.

The Museum tells these stories and many more. In fact, the Museum's coverage of the missile range's 3,200 square miles looks back to prehistoric times, when, for centuries, hunter-gatherers collected mesquite pods and killed now extinct camels, mammoths and horses for food. Their campsites, bedrock grinding stones, pottery and rock art are found all over the missile range.



Chupadero Olla 1100 AD



Mogollon Rock Art 900 - 1400 AD

During wet cycles these people were able to establish more sedentary lifestyles. They built permanent pueblo structures, farmed the edges of the Tularosa Basin and traded goods with groups in Mexico and Central America.

Europeans arrived in the form of Spanish explorers and missionaries at the end of the 16th Century. Their "Royal Road," the Camino Real, ran along the Rio Grande just to the west of White Sands.



Victorio

Friction between the local Apache tribes and European settlers erupted into violence many times on what is now White Sands. In 1880, Buffalo Soldiers



9th Cavalry Bugler

from the 9th Cavalry clashed with Chief Victorio's Apache followers in the missile range's Hembrillo Basin.

Once Victorio was defeated, pioneering ranchers and miners flooded into the area. On these dry, marginal lands, ranchers managed to make a living raising cattle, goats and sheep. Miners found



Cowboys discuss strategy for a roundup

a vast variety of minerals in the mountains but never the bonanza strike.



Jack Aeby's photo is the only color image of the first atomic bomb test at Trinity.

At the close of WWII, White Sands Proving Ground was established to test the emerging rocket technology. Since 1945 the missile range has conducted more than

42,000 missile and rocket firings. In addition to

examining new weapon systems for the Army, Navy and Air Force, the range also conducts purely scientific research. Rocket payloads from NASA are regularly launched to collect information about the sun and stars or conduct microgravity experiments.



German V-2 rocket is prepared for May 16, 1946 launch, the first successful US firing.



Columbia landed at WSMR March 30, 1982 and the Space Harbor is still a backup landing site.